



SUBJECT: Framework for managing twin city relationships

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Clerks Department

Report Number: CL-20-17

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 130-02

Date to Committee: November 27, 2017

Date to Council: December 11, 2017

Recommendation:

Amend the City of Burlington framework for managing twin city relationships approved as clerks department report CL-01-07 to permit the celebration of twinning anniversaries every five years.

Purpose:

An Engaging City

- Good Governance
 - Community Building through Arts and Culture via Community Activities
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Background and Discussion:

In February 2007 Council approved clerks department report CL-01-07, a framework for managing twin city relationships in terms of gifts, official visits and associated events.

In particular, the approved framework outlines that the City of Burlington will celebrate the anniversary of our twin city relationships once every five years, including the 25th year. After the 25th year, twinning anniversary celebrations are to occur every 10 years.

In June 2017, the Mundialization Committee submitted their annual report and work plan to the Committee of the Whole. In appendix A to clerks department report CL-08-17, the Mundialization Committee put forward a recommendation for a modification to the city's twinning protocol to permit the continuation of anniversary celebrations in five year intervals. The Mundialization Committee members feel strongly that not having

official contact for 10 years will jeopardize the level of interest and the commitment of the twinning relationship.

In response to the Mundialization Committee's suggestion, Council at its meeting held in July 2017 approved the following staff direction SD-7-17:

Direct the City Clerk to investigate the Mundialization Committee's proposal to amend the framework for managing twin city relationships outlined in clerks department report CL-01-07, approved by council on February 5, 2007 to permit the celebration of twinning anniversaries every five years beyond the 25th year.

Following council's direction, clerks department staff contacted the Mayor of Itabashi to gauge the city's interest in continuing anniversary celebrations in five year intervals. Mayor Takeshi Sakamoto, on behalf of the City of Itabashi, relayed that they will continue to commemorate the twinning relationship every five years and look forward to Burlington's cooperation in continuing to work together to strengthen the twinning relationship.

Burlington and Itabashi are currently in their 28th year of twinning and the relationship continues to be active and vibrant. (This matter is less imminent for the relationship with Apeldoorn, the Netherlands as Burlington is celebrating 15 years of twinning with Apeldoorn in 2020.) Through the dedication of the citizens on the Burlington Mundialization committee the following provides a sampling of the committed twinning relationship between Burlington and Itabashi:

- This past year, the annual Sakura Festival held at the Art Gallery of Burlington attracted more than 300 people to the two hour event showcasing Japanese culture through cultural displays of dance, fashion and music.
- In partnership with the Burlington Public Library, a Japanese cultural presentation is offered approximately every eight weeks to Burlington residents.
- This year marks the 11th annual elementary student art exchange where art from Burlington and Itabashi students is displayed in art galleries in the respective cities.
- In 2017, the first pen pal exchange between high school students will commence.

These exchanges have allowed the cities to foster cultural understanding and supports Burlington's status as a 'world community' advancing the ideals of the United Nations to promote mutual trust and appreciation among people of different nations.

Celebrating twinning relationships in five year intervals provides a vital opportunity for leaders in both cities to strengthen their bonds and determine new ways to build upon past achievements. Both long standing and new members of the Mundialization Committee look forward to planning for a formal celebration of the 30th twinning anniversary with Itabashi, Japan in 2019.

Financial Matters:

Costs associated with ongoing Mundialization Committee programs and activities for both anniversary and non-anniversary years are supported within the approved Mundialization Committee budget.

Costs associated with official corporate Mundialization programs and activities for both anniversary and non anniversary years (receptions, gifts and travel) are supported within the Corporate Mundialization budget.

An ongoing reserve fund is maintained to support corporate Mundialization activities, including anniversary celebrations and other council-approved initiatives related to the city's twinning relationships.

Connections:

The Mundialization Committee actively works in cooperation with a number of community partners (Burlington Public Library, Royal Canadian Legion, Art Gallery of Burlington, Tourism Burlington, Halton District School Board, Halton Catholic District School board, teachers, students and cultural communities)

The report recommendation is consistent with the intent of By-law 114-1985, a bylaw to declare Burlington a World Community and Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040 direction to 'reach out to new and diverse communities to expand the cultural fabric' of Burlington.

Public Engagement Matters:

The Burlington Mundialization Committee takes advantage of all city media channels to provide transparent communication to Burlington and Halton residents about the activities carried out by the committee during anniversary and non-anniversary years and to encourage participation by Burlington and Halton residents.

Conclusion:

In order to build upon the strong relationships between Burlington and its twin cities of Itabashi, Japan and Apeldoorn, the Netherlands it is recommended that twinning celebrations continue to be celebrated in five year intervals.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Palermo

Committee Clerk

905-335-7600, ext. 7492

Appendices:

A. Letter from Mayor of Itabashi, Japan

Notifications:

Mayor Takeshi Sakamoto, Itabashi, Japan

Mayor John Berends, Apeldoorn, the Netherlands

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.